

PowerUP Jax Fall 2016 Grant Winner

2. **Jessica Fessenden**
Samuel Wolfson High School
Subject/Grade: 11th and 12th
Project Title: TEDXWolfson: A community-partnered discussion to increase global mindedness

Summary of Project:

The goal of this project is to host a "TED" style event at Samuel Wolfson High School that provides an opportunity for students to participate in an active conversation about global issues with members of our community. The need for this project comes out of our International Baccalaureate program and the Theory of Knowledge class. Students are encouraged to engage in issues of global importance and to think about issues in a global context. To accomplish this we regularly bring in issues going on around the world, but students are left to discussing the issues with their peers and this creates an echo-chamber that does not provide the greatest potential benefit to the students. The community surrounding Wolfson's campus is rich in this cultural diversity, and this is reflected in our student population. Too often this diversity is labeled as a barrier to education, and not appreciated for its potential in enhancing student engagement and global awareness. The goal of this project is to take the conversation of global issues out of the classroom, bring in community members who are active in issues of global importance, and to put them on stage next to students with ideas of their own. The goal is to open a rich dialog about the potential for change and interaction between students and community members. Students will be responsible for directly facilitating the event, including the determination of the topics that will be discussed, the invitations to the community and the facilitation of the event.

How many students will be directly involved? Explain any further impact on other students, teachers, the school as a whole, and/or the community.

This project would directly involve the 72 11th and 12th grade IB students in the Theory of Knowledge class, and would encourage participation and involvement from any other interested student. The 11th and 12th grade Theory of Knowledge classes will facilitate the event and will directly shape the dialog that will happen at the event. There is a designated team of five students who are taking on the direct facilitation and leadership of the event. The student population chosen to participate directly in this event, the 72 11th and 12th grade IB students, are a highly diverse population with about a third of the students having English as their second language. Our goal in doing this is that we are able to encourage our students to think about larger issues and to stimulate interest in the global economy, which will shape their interests in collegiate study and career choice. Bringing in speakers and facilitating an event where students can be part of a larger community conversation can help our students find perspective and insight into issues that are interesting to them, but that they are currently unaware or under-aware of.

How will the project specifically increase student learning? Be sure to explain the project's connections to existing learning standards. Be clear about what new skills, knowledge, and/or dispositions the students will acquire.

The goal of this project is to increase global awareness and collaborative discussions. The event will directly encourage students to participate in a larger dialogue about world issues, and bring our students together with members of the community who are making an impact globally, either by acting locally or through participation in larger global events. This project builds on the common core objectives that are facilitated in the Theory of Knowledge classroom, including CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1, in which students are encouraged to "Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively." This project particularly encapsulates points B,C, and D under this provision. Students will: • CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.B "Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed." • CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.C "Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives." • CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D "Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task." These learning objectives are directly in line with the Common Core and State of Florida objectives for 11th and 12th grade students.

What is your plan for evaluating the success of your project? What artifacts (photographs, samples of student work, testimonials, etc...) would you use to demonstrate the effectiveness of the project?

The goal of this event is to create an atmosphere where we can facilitate the beginning of a conversation about global awareness of contemporary world issues within our community. The way that I will be able to judge the success of this project won't come from one evening of discussion or simply participation in the event, but instead from the ongoing discussion and activism that comes out of the evening. The hope is that this TED style evening promotes interest among

students and community leaders, and that we can build partnerships that will flourish and provide further opportunity for students at Wolfson High School to become active advocates and volunteers within the community. The effectiveness of this project begins with the TED event, of which I will have a program and a log of discussion topics and participants. From there students will be responsible for keeping volunteer logs of their time spent with the community partners, and students will participate in an ongoing reflection process in which they will be required to set goals and reflect on their progress. Students will also be providing insight on the global and community issues that they become advocates for in the Wolfson High School newspaper. Students will also be required to update a class blog that will keep an ongoing account of the relationship between students and community partners. A final portfolio that consists of photographs, student reflections and published articles will be produced at the conclusion of the 2016-2017 school year.